

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 10290

E.O. 11652: GDS; TAGS: PFOR EG US

SUBJECT: CODEL SOLARZ MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SADAT

1. DURING ONE-HALF HOUR MEETING WITH HOUSE INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEMBER STEPHEN SOLARZ ON OCT 15, PRESIDENT SADAT MADE FOLLOWING COMMENTS OF INTEREST: CONGRESSMAN HAS CLEARED THIS MESSAGE. AMBASSADOR HAD ARRANGED MEETING AND WAS PRESENT AS WAS POL COUNSELOR.

2. IN RESPONSE TO QUERY ABOUT WHAT ARMS HE WOULD BE SEEKING FROM US AND WHY, PRESIDENT SAID HIS NEED FOR ARMS DEMONSTRATED BY FACT THAT DURING 1974 US REPLACED ALL ISRAELI LOSSES AND USSR REPLACED ALL SYRIAN LOSSES; WHEREAS FROM OCT 13, 1973 UNTIL JAN 1975 EGYPT RECEIVED NOTHING. SADAT SAID HE MADE DECISION IN MID-1974 TO DIVERSIFY SOURCES OF ARMS. HE CITED PRESENCE OF BRITISH HELICOPTERS AND FRENCH MIRAGE IN OCT 6 PARADE AS FIRST FRUITS OF THIS POLICY. HE STRESSED THAT HIS POSITION DEPENDS ON HIS ABILITY TO DEFEND HIS COUNTRY. HE WILL NOT BE ASKING FOR LARGE QUANTITIES SUCH AS ISRAEL, BUT ONLY FOR IMMEDIATE REQUIREMENTS TO KEEP HIS FORCES IN GOOD SHAPE. HE ADDED THAT ARMS ALREADY RECEIVED BY ISRAEL HAVE DRASTICALLY CHANGED MILITARY BALANCE OF POWER.

3. IN RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC QUESTION, SADAT SAID HE WOULD SEEK ONLY DEFENSIVE WEAPONS LIKE TOW MISSILES, "MODERATELY" ADVANCED AIRCRAFT, HELICOPTERS, ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND NAVAL GUNBOATS. HE SAID EGYPTIAN NAVY HAS RECEIVED NOTHING FOR TEN YEARS AND EGYPT HAS OVER 2000 KM OF SHORELINE TO DEFEND.

4. SOLARZ REFERRED TO THE PROVISION IN SINAI II AGREEMENT NOT TO USE MILITARY FORCE AND ASKED WHAT EGYPT'S POSITION WOULD BE IN EVENT OF SYRIAN-ISRAELI WAR. SADAT SAID IF ISRAEL ATTACKS SYRIA, HE WOULD
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HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO JOIN IN. HE BELIEVED THAT SYRIA WOULD

NEVER ATTACK ISRAEL BECAUSE WITHOUT EGYPT, SYRIA CAN DO NOTHING AND KNOWS IT. SOLARZ SUGGESTED ASAD MAY ATTEMPT TO FORCE EGYPT'S HAND BY ATTACKING. SADAT REITERATED THAT HE WAS SURE ASAD WOULD NOT BECAUSE ASAD HAD HAD LOTS OF EXPERIENCE FROM THE LAST WAR.

5. SADAT SAID HE COULD NOT BE SURE SYRIA WOULD RENEW UNEF MANDATE, BECAUSE HE FOUND BA'AT, LIKE QADDHAFI, UNPREDICTABLE. HE THOUGHT, HOWEVER, USSR WOULD ADVISE SYRIA TO RENEW AND SYRIANS HEED WHAT SOVIETS SAY.

6. SOLARZ ASKED WHAT PRESIDENT ENVISAGED HAPPENING IF AT END OF THREE-YEAR PERIOD NO NEW ACCORD REACHED. SADAT SAID THAT HE HAD PROVEN OVER PAST FIVE YEARS THAT HE IS MAN OF HIS WORD. HE WILL RENEW UNEF MANDATE ANNUALLY THROUGH OCTOBER 24, 1977 PROVIDED OF COURSE THAT ISRAELIS FULFILL ALL OF THEIR OBLIGATIONS. SO FAR IT APPEARS THAT THEY ARE AND EGYPT EXPECTS TO GET ITS FIRST OIL FROM SINAI

BY NOVEMBER. SADAT SAID HE HAD GIVEN HIS WORD TO PRESIDENT FORD THAT ANNUAL RENEWAL WOULD TAK PLACE THROUGH 1977. HOWEVER, STARTING FROM 1976, MOVES MUST BEGIN TOWARD A GLOBAL SOLUTION, EGYPT RECOMMENDS GENEVA EVEN THOUGH SOVIETS WILL CAUSE TROUBLE THERE BECAUSE THEY ARE FURIOUS WITH SINAI II AGREEMENT. HE SAID HE HAD AGREED TO SIGN SINAI II IN GENEVA MAINLY TO SAVE FACE FOR THE SOVIETS. IN ANY CASE, HE WILL CONTINUE FULFILL HIS COMMITMENTS WITH THE US ON THE BASES AGREED ON WITH PRESIDENT FORD. HE ANTICIPATES THAT AFTER 1976 ELECTIONS, THERE WILL BE VERY PRACTICAL STEPS TAKEN TOWARD A GLOBAL SETTLEMENT. HE IS NOT, THEREFORE, WORRIED ABOUT 1977 AND WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT END OF THREE-YEAR PERIOD.

7. SOLARZ ASKED HOW PRESIDENT ENVISAGED SHAPE OF A FINAL SETTLEMENT AND SPECIFICALLY WHETHER IT WOULD ENCOMPASS RETURN OF PALESTINIAN REFUGEES TO ISRAEL. SADAT REPLIED THAT HE COULD NOT SPEAK FOR PALESTINIANS. THEY ARE DIVIDED AMONG THEMSELVES AND UNTIL NOW HAVE NOT AGREED ON ANY SPECIFIC PROPOSALS. HE HOPED TO SEE CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE AFTER WHICH FURTHER STEPS COULD TAKE SHAPE. PRESIDENT SAID HE BELIEVED FORMATION OF A PALESTINE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT WOULD MAKE THINGS EASIER. IN RESPONSE TO QUERY WHETHER PALESTINIAN ISSUE COULD BE DEALT WITH OTHER THAN THROUGH PLO, SADAT WAS ADAMANT IN SAYING RABAT
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DECISION STILL STOOD.

8. SOLARZ ASKED IF RESIDENT WOULD BE WILLING TO SIGN PEACE TREATY OR AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL AND DID HE MAKE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THEM. SADAT MADE SHARP DISTINCTION SAYING THAT TREATY WOULD IMPLY DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, TRADE, AND OTHER LINKS. AFTER 28 YEARS OF VIOLENCE, HATE AND WAR IT IS TOO EARLY TO DISCUSS THESE ELEMENTS. SADAT SAID "LET US FIRST MAKE PEACE AGREEMENT AND END STATE OF

BELLIGERENCY." THEN LEAVE NEXT STEPS TO FUTURE GENERATIONS. HE DID NOT EXPECT IN HIS LIFETIME TO SEE TOURISM AND TRADE BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL.

9. SOLARZ ASKED IF PRESIDENT SAW ROOM FOR THIRD INTERIM AGREEMENT IN SINAI. SADAT ANSWERED IN NEGATIVE SAYING NEXT STEP MUST BE FINAL AND IT WILL MEAN PEACE.

10. SOLARZ ASKED IF FINAL SETTLEMENT COULD INCLUDE SMALL TERRITORIAL CHANGES IN SINAI. SADAT REPLIED IN NEGATIVE SAYING HE COULD NOT RELINQUISH "ONE INCH" OF TERRITORY. HOWEVER, HE WAS WILLING TO ACCEPT SOME UN-TYPE FORCE AT SHARM AL-SHAikh.

11. SOLARZ ASKED ABOUT US GUARANTEE FOR ISRAEL AS PART OF FINAL SETTLEMENT. SADAT SAID THAT WHEN THIS POINT IS REACHED, HE IS READY TO CONSIDER GUARANTEES. HOWEVER, IF US GIVES ISRAEL A GUARANTEE FOR ITS BORDERS, EGYPT WILL ASK FOR SAME GUARANTEE. ON DEMILITARIZED ZONES, EGYPT WOULD ACCEPT RECIPROCAL DEMILITARIZATION, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT DIFFERENT SIZE OF EGYPT AND ISRAEL.

12. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION AS TO WHETHER SOVIETS WANTED PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IN MIDDLE EAST, SADAT SAID HE WISHED TO REPLY IN CONFIDENCE SINCE HE DID NOT WISH FURTHER TROUBLE WITH SOVIETS. IN FACT, HE BELIEVED SOVIETS DO NOT WANT MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT BECAUSE IT WOULD REMOVE THEIR ABILITY TO HAVE INFLUENCE IN INDIVIDUAL ARAB STATES. THIS WAS PROVEN, IN HIS OPINION, BY SOVIET EXTREME ANGER OVER SINAI II AGREEMENT WHICH PROVED THAT US HOLD 99 PERCENT OF CARDS AND IT CAN EXCLUDE SOVIETS FROM THE AREA. THERE IS NO REASON WHY US CANNOT DO THIS BECAUSE PRESIDENT FORD DID IT AS AN INTERIM PRESIDENT AND NEWLY ELECTED PRESIDENT WILL BE THAT MUCH STRONGER.

13. SOLARZ ASKED IF ADVERSE SYRIAN REACTION ACCURATELY REFLECTED
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ASAD'S VIEWS. SADAT SAID SYRIANS WILL FOLLOW WHATEVER EGYPT DOES. THEY MORELY WANT EGYPTIANS TO DO THEIR DIRTY WORK AND HE CITED 1949 RHODES AGREEMENT WHERE SYRIA HAD AT FIRST REFUSED TO ATTEND NEGOTIATIONS HELD IN SEPARATE ROOMS, BUT AFTER EGYPT SIGNED, SYRIAN ENDED UP SITTING IN SAME ROOM WITH ISRAELIS.

14. SOLARZ ASKED IF PRESIDENT BELIEVED ISRAELIS SINCERELY WANTED PEACE. SADAT REPLIED IN NEGATIVE. HE SAID ONE OF HIS GREATEST WORRIES IS THAT ISRAELIS DO NOT WANT PEACE AND, BECAUSE OF THE MOBILIZATION MENTALITY OF PAST 25 YEARS, THEY ARE INCAPABLE OF SEEKING PEACE. THIS IS WHY THEY REFUSED AGREEMENT IN MARCH. SOLARZ ASKED WHAT HAD CHANGED BETWEEN MARCH AND SEPTEMBER. SADAT REPLIED THAT STRONG POSITION TAKEN BY PRESIDENT FORD HAD FORCED ISRAELIS TO HAVE SECOND THOUGHTS. IT HAD ALSO PROVEN THAT US HAS CAPABILITY TO BRING ABOUT FULL SETTLEMENT.

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